

St John Fisher, Bishop and St Thomas More, Martyrs

As we celebrate Saint John Fisher and Saint Thomas More, martyrs, I would like us to meditate on Submission to God's Holy Will. In fact, John Fisher and Thomas More are the brave who resisted the king's command, saying: in this matter it is our duty to disobey. The absolute obedience is to God alone; God who gives life and calls us to live in a community of brothers and sisters.

For all the times we were disobedient to God's Will, the will that calls us to accept one another as a brother or a sister and accept God as the Father of us all, we confess and say: Kyrie eleison; Christe eleison; Kyrie eleison

Meditation on: Maccabees 6: 18.21. 24-31; Matthew 24: 4-13.

Submission to God's Holy Will

Jesus, as our elder brother, invites us to accept his teachings as the teachings for the salvation of the entire world. Jesus also calls us to be obedient to the will of God so that God's reign may be established in the whole world. As Christians we exist for the establishment of God's reign in our hearts and in the world. Therefore, we wouldn't encourage any commandment which has the intention of destroying the reign of God; a commandment which neglects the rights and duties of human beings.

Today's readings encourage us in one way or another to be brave and not be afraid to defend the cause of God and that of human being created in God's image. Sometimes one is tempted to give up his/her good fight for peace and justice because of people or events that discourage him/her in his/her fight. The Lord says, "take care that no one deceives you." You need to carry on your good fight for the well-being of all. Do not allow anyone or any event to discourage or mislead you in your noble fight.

John Fisher and Thomas More did not allow anyone to disorient their fight for the establishment of the reign of God in the world in general and in the hearts of people in particular. No wonder, they bravely resisted evil and kept their faith in the God of their master and saviour, Jesus Christ. In the footsteps of Jesus Christ, they taught the message of salvation with joy and courage. They invited people to receive Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world; the saviour who humbled himself in order to serve his brothers and sisters, teaching them how to love God and to love one another as children of one family.

I am always comforted and strengthened by the following words of John Fisher: "A good man is not a perfect man; a good man is an honest man, faithful and unhesitatingly responsive to the voice of God in his life." Let our lives be shaped by the message of salvation that God constantly whispers in our hearts and souls. As Christians we are called to support everything that contributes for the edification of a world of faith, love and hope.

You may have noticed that very often it is when one loses hope that love and faith start disappearing slowly. And when love and faith disappear, it becomes difficult for one to stand for the cause of God and of his brothers and sisters, human beings. Eleazar, in the first reading, impresses me with his wise decision in front of those who wanted to disorient him in his faith. Eleazar reacted and said these words to those who wanted to put him to death because of his faith: "If I am man enough to quit this life here and now I shall prove myself worthy of my old age, and I shall have left the young a noble example of how to make a good death eagerly and generously, for the venerable and holy laws."

Eleazar disobeyed the king's commandment, a commandment which forced him to deny his faith. Eleazar said: "The Lord whose knowledge is holy sees clearly that, though I might have escaped death, whatever agonies of body I now endure under this bludgeoning, in my soul I am glad to suffer, because of the awe which he inspires me" As disciples of Jesus, we always say no to Satan and all his vain and empty promises. So, let us be committed to our promises no matter what threats that we receive here and there in different ways. Scripture says: "Many false prophets will arise; they will deceive many, and with the increase of lawlessness, love in most men will grow cold; but the man who stands firm to the end will be saved."

John Fisher and Thomas More are among people who stood firm in their faith and who boldly witnessed to the love of God; their love for God and for their brothers and sisters never grew cold. The following words show how Thomas More was determined to be obedient to God's will: "I die the king's faithful servant, but God's first." Yes, God first, then the world will be a paradise where love remains the driving force of all.

O Lord, our God let your face shine on us. Save us in your love.

Be strong, let your heart take courage, all who hope in the Lord.

The Lord is our salvation! It is he who will deliver us from false prophets and from hatred!